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ABSTRACT

Although contemporary psychologists generally acknowledge the significance of affect in human experience, few have attempted to understand its role in cognitive processes. The same can be said of writing specialists. In fact, New Criticism, so long dominant in American literary thinking, still continues to influence the emotions writers disclose publicly and perhaps even those they experience during composing. Nevertheless, a perusal of writers' diaries, interview transcripts, memoirs, and autobiographies amply documents the presence of emotions during the process. Negative emotions move writers to composing as easily if not more easily than positive emotions. Expression frequently results, however, not from one emotion's dominance over the other, but from the juxtaposition of positive and negative feelings. Not typically found in their pure states, emotions mix, blend, become subtler and richer in meaning, appear to be experienced simultaneously, and seem sometimes paradoxical but under voluntary control. An emotions model is needed to describe the relationship of emotion to the lexical and syntactic choices made in writing. A failure to examine emotion with the same critical attention that cognition inspires is a glaring oversight. Evidence and thought point at least to the reciprocal role of cognitive and affective processes in our mental life, which makes the role of emotion in writing too apposite to ignore. (HOD)

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HOT COGNITION: EMOTION AND WRITING BEHAVIOR

Alice G. Brand

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Hot Cognition: Emotion and Writing Behavior

Although contemporary psychologists generally acknowledge the significance of affect in human experience, few attempts have been made to understand its role in cognitive processes (Zajonc, 1980). Important books on cognition (Anderson, 1976, Estes, 1975-1978; Neisser, 1967) barely mention the subject of emotion, feeling, or sentiment. Unlike the strictly cognitive and physiological psychologists, social psychologists are deeply concerned with affect. These psychologists contend that to consider people dispassionate, information processing systems is a poor if not fearfully inaccurate model of the human being (Izard, 1971; Plutchik & Kellerman, 1980; Tomkins, 1981). They say that a positivistic psychology has been too "cold" to carry the entire motivational burden. What is needed is some way to heat up cognition-- a theory that unites the cognitively blind but arousing system of affect with the subtle cognitive apparatus (Tomkins, 1981). In an otherwise cold-blooded tradition of cognitive science and flow chart intelligence, the idea of hot cognition (Abelson,1963) became a major humanizing counterstatement during the mid 1960s and early 1970s.

Essentially what hot cognition means is cognition colored by feeling. To these theorists, practically all human experience implicates affect in some way. The meaning of events is governed by what we feel and the options available to us for its expression. Our language continually projects information about our opinions, preferences, and evaluations. Affect is the currency by which social intercourse is transacted. Linguistically empty events like body posture and facial expression are clearly guided by affect-laden perceptions. Matters of life and death are not left to the slower working cognitive structures (Temoshok, 1983). People don't get married or divorced, commit murder or suicide, or lay down their lives for their country based on a detailed analysis of the pros and

cons of their actions. If we stop to consider how much the course of our lives is controlled by cognitive processes and how much is controlled by affective ones and how much each influences the other, we must admit that affective phenomena deserve far more attention than they have received by cognitive psychologists (Zajonc, 1980).

So too by writing specialists. Using the knowledge of one discipline to deepen or extend the knowledge of another is a traditional if not respected practice. Research in written discourse has been the benificiary of knowledge from the physical sciences, the animal psychologies, and mainstream philosophy. We are now learning about writing by applying knowledge from the field of cognitive psychology to that process. It is an appropriate and important merger. But it is easy to lose sight of the impact of the emotions on the intellect since, in education and academic psychology alike, cognition has been narrowly interpreted as conscious and linear reasoning (Averill, 1974). And, of all activities, writing so exemplifies it. Although feeling is strongly implied in Emig's (1971) construct of reflexive writing, Britton's (1975) construct of expressive writing, Kinneavy's (1971) expressive aims, and Elbow's (1973) and Macrorie's (1976) personal truth writing; although writing specialists concede that nonlinguistic mental activities occur during composing and occur outside of conscious control but strong enough to impinge on writing (Mandel, 1980; Moffett, 1982), the act of writing has been over-rationalized. Discourse theorists and researchers emphasize writing as a conscious and intentional intellectual act which can be planned, tracked, analyzed, and predicted (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Gebhardt, 1982; Gregg & Steinberg, 1980; Miller,1983). The act of writing is viewed as a mental process that functions with sequential,deliberate, machine-like objectivity. A recent article handsomely charts the writing event from historical cntext to grapheme and the development of writing ability from

grapheme to historical context (Miller, 1983). Another (Gebhardt, 1982), arguing for a writing theory that embodies both linear and nonlinear models, notes some prevailing views of writing: as a massive coordination of a massive number of motor processes; as an interaction of eye, hand, and brain; as an interplay of planning, translating, and reviewing. And what "drives" this process is an elaborate network of goals and subgoals (p. 626). All this without one mention of emotion.

This is indeed curious. The same theorists who belong to these views turn for support to Polanyi (1958), Piaget (& Inhelder,1969; Inhelder & Piaget, 1958), and Langer (1967), none of whom was shy about enunciating the contribution of affect to intellectual development. Polanyi argued that knowledge is tacit and personal; Piaget, that emotion is the fuel of cognitive functions; Langer, that the intellect we associate with the human mind is a result of the evolution of human feeling. Langer particularly tries to show that "the entire psychological field--including human conception, responsible action, rationality, knowledge--is a vast and branching development of feeling" (p. 23).

Emotions are basic. The affect systems of the simpliest forms of life are approach and avoidance responses (Izard, cited in Howe & Dienstbier, 1979). While lower animals show emotion, these nonrational activities lack the range and subtlety found in humans. Both our physical and mental well-being depends on the cooperation of all our various biological and psychological component systems. Our physiology takes care of much of this coordination at the lower levels. But there is little justification for drawing a sharp distinction between emotion and cognition and assigning to emotion the more primitive of the two functions. Not only is the human brain larger than that of lower animals, but its biology is infinitely more complex than is necessary for physical survival. The parallel evolution of the human intellectual and emotional capaci-

ties has brought about a greater complexity and differentiation of both these functions (Averill, 1974; Lazarus, cited in Arnold, 1970). Human emotions interact with cognitions and the resulting affective and cognitive structures form a virtually limitless number of motivational experiences that characterize human consciousness and behavior (Izard, 1971). Most important, our higher mental functions are the result of an elaborate emotion-laden system. From this fact is derived the distinctive human capacity for self-consciousness and symbolic manipulation which we identify with full blown language. It is not without reason that in English the word feeling has connotations so broad as to include simple sensations as well as high level affects.

Just because we can only think of one thing at a time or write only one thing at a time does not mean that only one thing at a time is happening in our minds. Ordinary conscious awareness is a narrow band between things occurring in our subconscious and things occurring in our supreconscious(Mandler, 1975). The work of writing takes place in this consciousness. But it too is the result of the enormously complex mental goings-on to which we have only partial access. The intellect is just one part of cognition. A person's subjectivity provides us with far more than this kind of knowledge-- and far more than researchers have cared to believe. The fact is that rational thinking barely begins to account for the richness of our mental life--our intuitions, insights, imagination, memory--and our feelings. There are ways of knowing apart from writing; observing, guessing, and feeling are some of them. There are several ways of thinking: intuitive and rational, autistic and realistic, primary process and secondary process, and prelogical and logical. The problem solving that we associate with conscious cognizing often relies on less-than-conscious, intuitive, or prelogical thought. Thinking in pictures, a form of primary process activity and part of the subjective experience of dreams and fantasies, surely

acts on linguistic thought and outer speech. Reasoning through language is only one --albeit significant-- form of thought impinging on writing. Other non-linguistic mediating processes that impinge on writing are insights, imagery, and memory. And these occur at several levels of mental functioning (e.g.,perceptual, analytic, intuitive). So that if the sum total of the mental activity that acts on writing goes on both in and outside of our conscious awareness; if writing specialists acknowledge the contribution of emotion to writing; if studies of writing appeal to other disciplines to learn about itself; why is formal inquiry into the matter virtually nonexistent?

For a long time emotion was considered a simple, undifferentiated phenomena whose meaning was not specified beyond a vague polarity. Pleasant feelings were counterbalanced by unpleasant ones. People were emotional or they were not. Human behavior was (and in some circles still is) believed to be regulated by a single hedonic principle: impulses to increase what is pleasant and avoid what is not. This theme had its origins in the classical dichotomy between the reasoned, modulated human versus the impassioned, sensitive one-- the Dionysian versus the Apollonian. However, emotion and reason were not true opposites. To the extent that emotion complemented reason, it served true knowledge. According to this view, humans were basically rational. But in order to sustain their rationality, they had to control their baser, emotional selves. This idea established early in Western thought the core dualism between mental functions and bodily processes. The rational soul was placed in the head and the mortal, irrational part of the soul or emotion was placed far away in the visceral cavities where it would contaminate reason as little as possible. Emotion was further subdivided into superior and inferior human functions. It was with the superior part that humans felt anger. It was with the inferior or appetitive part below the waist that humans craved, food, drink, and sex.

In this tradition, the intellect was active and the emotions were passive. Humans did not consciously initiate emotional experiences. They underwent them. Emotions happened to people. According to the ideal, if humans reasoned through certain impulses before they acted on them, they would not act on them. However, since humans did display these behaviors, the way to account for them was to consider humans helpless in the face of whatever produced them. Conveniently, once emotions were ruled out of conscious control, people could not be held responsible for the acts that resulted-- in much the same way that animals couldn't be. And because these behaviors were animal-like, emotions or passions were considered lower in nature and more properly applied to negative than to positive states.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, Darwin's audacious theory of evolution furnished a wealth of evidence demonstrating the phylogenetic links between human beings and animals. Drawing on physiognomic similarities, Darwin enunciated the universal capacity for affective response among living things. They were the first link in the evolution of adaptive functions that differentiated animals from plants and eventually humans from all other organisms. *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1894) formed the cornerstone for an entire tradition of inferring human emotions from facial expression, a line of inquiry still very much alive (Ekman, Friesen, & Ancoli,1980).

Of course, Aristotle had recognized this connection. His psychological treatise, *de Anima*, enunciated the continuity between animal and plant behavior. Living matter was composed of two related entities, the psyche or soul and the body. The psyche was a function of the body and was divided into parts hierarchically arranged by complexity. Nutrition was the simpliest activity, belonging to all plants and animals including humans. Sensory

discrimination was the next level of functioning, again belonging to animals and humans. Next in complexity were the appetites or motivations. Following these was locomotion. Acts of reasoning, the highest form of living process, were exclusive to humans. The progression in this psychology was from processes which were wholly involuntary and base to those which were vaguely or indirectly associated with bodily functions to those which were completely voluntary and disembodied and called the active intellect.

The early Western thinking that placed the rational soul in the head and linked the base cravings with the noncognitive "soul" endured through and beyond Cartesian dualism. Descartes' (1596-1650) personal conflict between church dogma and the study of natural human phenomena did not prevent him from reaffirming the separation but interaction of a mechanically operated body and its "free" insubstantial soul or mind. The brain was established as the locus of the mind. Human reasoning became identified with a separate entity which interacted with the body at the only unduplicated part of the brain, the pineal gland. Having located the intersection between the soul and the body, Descartes named six primary passions. And because of their unfavorable contrast to reason, he too considered emotion externally initiated and relegated them to lower bodily structures.

Such were the themes that ran through descriptions of the passions as they were called until the eighteenth century. As physiological psychology became scientifically respectable, the word emotion replaced the term passions and empirical approaches to the study of its nature came into currency.

The work of nineteenth century logician Bain (1864,1875) marked that turning point in pre-scientific psychology. Bain aligned himself with the philosophers on the one hand and the physiologists on the other. Like the ancients, he supported the dualism that divided all psychological phenomena into physical

and mental aspects. Like the Enlightenment philosophers, he endorsed the tripartite division of the mind : the cognitive, conative, and affective faculties . Like earlier physiologists, he looked upon the human senses as the building blocks of the higher mental functions. And like Wundt(1896/1907) and other psychologists to come, he held that affect preceded volition and influenced it. As a matter of fact, Bain believed that the "natural" intellectual associations were continually sabotaged by emotion.

If the adaptive view of the emotions maintained its continuity through Darwin in the 19th century and instinctivist McDougall(1918) in the early 20th century, the maladaptive perspective was consolidated through the psychoanalytic model. Emotions in this psychology, though instinctive in origin, represented human disorder. Freud maintained that emotions were derived from the basic biological unit or drive, as did the evolutionists. But rather than rely for his evidence on such expressive behavior as facial change, Freud relied almost exclusively on introspection. Emotions were regulated by the unconscious, the discharge of which were manifestations of primal conflict. Aggression, frustration, anxiety, and guilt represented tensions produced by these primal conflicts and motivated individuals to reduce them at all psychological cost. The state of anxiety was especially studied as a way of explaining emotions as pathological(Freud,1936). Repression demanded a constant expenditure of energy (Freud 1915/1925;1925). Anxiety occurred when repressive forces aimed at suppressing emotion were weakened(Freud,1936). Hence the notion that emotions were compensatory responses and manifestations of human disorganization. Early personality theorists also perpetuated the idea of emotion as a disturbed human condition (Murphy,1947; Young,1943). Emotional responses innervated the autonomic system, disorganized behavior, and interfered with normal human enterprise. While later work softened this stand

(Leeper, 1948; Young, 1967), the legacy still stood--to the extent that even long range, adaptive responses were preceded by a temporary loss of normally integrated affect. It is no wonder that the idea of the emotions have come to us with such a bad name.

For the better part of this century, the New Criticism has dominated literary thinking in America. Representing a countermovement to romanticism, impressionism, and the expressive theories of the humanities, Modernists and New Critics declared themselves guardians of literature for the lay public. Part of their thinking was that ordinary individuals could not be trusted to know what to read and what not to. It remained for scholars as experts to figure out what books people should read, how they should be read and what they meant, even how they should be written. For students of literature, pure text was declared the proper focus of analysis. Literature was to be examined with exclusive attention to the facts of the work undistorted by the student's personal encounter with it. Subjectivity, much less emotional engagement, was proscribed except as it illuminated theme or the structure of the language.

But far from casting emotions language from the critical vocabulary, scholars have exploited it as a way of rendering a work understandable. It has been more than permissible. It goes without saying. One mines for emotions in biographical researches of authors to explain a work. Or uses the emotions expressed in a work to explain the author. Or reads into a work the emotions necessary to explain both -- and in so doing effectively confuses attribution with interpretation.[1] Little more than a perfunctory reading of twentieth century criticism indicates that it is a rare article that doesn't obscure the boundary between the artistic projections of the critic and the psychology that

[1] Countless examples both from popular periodicals and academic criticism cite writers' emotional crises, contradictory feelings and impulses, emotional shifts of one sort or another, emotional needs to explore certain subjects, and ascribe similar phenomena to the work itself.

authors themselves bring to the work. One simply slides into the other. Explicating a work through its emotional properties has gradually come to mean emotions experienced by authors, irrespective of biographical fact. Where these have been supported by primary sources, fine. Where they have not, critics have taken the literary license they needed, regardless. For whatever reasons, such liberties have had more to do with displaying the imaginative resources of the scholar than with revealing the emotional profile of the writer. Over the years as authors and students of literature who came under the influence of the New Criticism gravitated to careers in teaching or criticism, they have passed along the formalism they themselves learned. So well schooled in this thinking that it is often difficult to distinguish the critic in them from the writer and both from the human being.

Some scholars took exception to this practice. Rosenblatt's (1938) transactional theory of reading, Shrodes (1943) bibliotherapeutic perspective, and more recently, Holland's (1975) application of the psychodynamics to literary response, Purves and Beach's (1972) reader response hierarchy, and Bleich's (1978) focus on subjectivity,have all appealed to emotion-- the core of reader response. But while this minority advocated an intimacy between reader and text, the prevailing sentiment still severed from involvement with literature the emotions of the reader, the critic, and by extension the writer.

During this time much work itself was supposedly being written in an aesthetically pure, objective tradition, detached from any effective moorings. Poetry in particular was expected to be a highly worked and structurally perfected composition, the personal voice entirely absent. Even now, long after it has lost its initial momentum, the New Criticism continues to have an impact on the emotions writers disclose publicly and perhaps on the emotions they experience during composing, independent of those expressed in the work. It is

not surprising that establishment writers are able to discuss the unconscious, the intuitive, the quasi-mystical qualities of their writing process with relative ease. [2] But when it comes to revealing their emotions, many simply do not respond--even when asked directly (Turner, 1977; see also (Berger & Berger, 1957; Cowley, 1958;Plimpton,1963-1981).

The fact that any such movement to study the emotions of writers is without members and that emotions theory is without place in contemporary writing research was anticipated oddly enough by Henry James(Moers,1976) in a comment about George Sand:

> she had something to say about most things in the universe; but the thing about which she had least to say was the writer's, the inventor's, the romancer's art. She possessed it by the gift of God, but she seems never to have felt the temptation to examine the pulse of the machine (p.12).

After all this, it is a wonder that authors were left with any emotion at all, much less while writing, much less recognizing its scribal advantages and saying as much. But of course that is precisely what exists. A perusal not of critical material but of the diaries, transcripts of interviews, memoirs, and autobiographies of writers amply documents the presence of emotions surrounding the process. What follows is neither a systematic nor a representative sampling of writers' emotions but a small labor to convince myself that the coincidence of emotions and writing was a reality larger than my own.

When positive emotions have been cited during composing these have been expressed as joy, heightened awareness, and inspiration. Happiness characterized the writings of Elizabeth Barrett (Moers, 1976), Joanna Field (cited in Moffat & Painter, 1974), and John Howard Griffin (1981), and somewhat more erratically in the work of Anais Nin (1975), Angus Wilson(1965), and William

[2] For example, out of 75 writers (64 males, 11 females) interviewed in the five volume series of the *Paris Review Interviews* (Cowley,1958; Plimpton, 1963-1981), William Gass is the one exception, making specific references to anger as a stimulus for his writing.

Wordsworth(1798/1959). Considerably more common in the literature are the emotions of interest and excitement, often singled out as the overarching precondition for composing. These feelings are stated directly or described hyperbolically by authors given to metaphor and apparently distribute themselves with some evenness over different types of writers (Broun,cited in Berger & Berger, 1957; Bradbury,1973; Ludlum, 1982; Gunther, 1961; Mitford, 1979; Chester, cited in Turner, 1977; W.C. Williams,1958). Where excitement or interest and arousal intersect, emotional intensity and writing fuse (Bellow, 1982; Broun, cited in Berger & Berger, 1957; Eiseley, 1975). Nonfiction and fiction writers alike credit their productivity to what seems to be an extreme form of interest: what Saul Bellow(1982) calls a hardness of intention, what Anais Nin (1975) called unusual stubbornness, what Harriet Beecher Stowe(Moers, 1976) called her deadly determination to write.

Emotion takes its most intellectual form in what discourse specialists call the need to make sense of experience --to my mind the equivalent of what writers benignly call the state of confusion and their effort to write as a stay against it (Byron, Kafka, W.Gag,cited in Dunaway & Evans,1957; Mansfield, cited in Moffat & Painter, 1974; C.D.Lewis, cited in Murray, 1968). From writing that organizes comes writing that empowers, also noted at one time or another by these authors (H.James, Kafka, Woolf,cited in Dunaway & Evans, 1957).

If positive emotions catalyze writing or accompany it, negative emotions outrank the positive in both these respects. The very same group expressing positive emotions at one time is driven to writing by depression, despair, and loneliness at other times (Beauvoir, 1960; Byron, G.Sand, Kafka, explorer R.F. Scott, and Woolf, cited in Dunaway & Evans, 1957; Nin, S.Tolstoy, cited in Moffat & Painter, 1974; Caruth,cited in Turner, 1977). The emotion of anger also stands out (J. Anderson, 1979; Milosz, cited in Hoffman, 1982; Mitford,1979; &

Cass, cited in Plimpton, 1981). Frustration with the writing process itself accounts for other negative emotions, with authors often eminently able to describe in writing periods when they couldn't (Beauvoir, 1960; James, cited in Dunaway & Evans, 1957; Mitford, 1979; G. Eliot, cited in Ponsonby, 1923; Sartre,1966). For every occasion of writer's block there is surely an occasion when writing has been enlisted to work out problems-- both with writing as well as with the nonliterary life (Woolf, cited in Dunaway & Evans, 1957, & Moffat & Painter, 1974; Eiseley, 1975; Scott-Maxwell, cited in Moffat & Painter, 1974; Nin, 1975; Frisch, cited in Singular, 1981; W.C. Williams, 1958; A.Wilson, 1965). At one time or another writing "saved" Eldridge Cleaver, Muriel Ruksyer, Lillian Roth, and Anne Sexton(if only for a while). Its cathartic qualities are legendary and noted by some of these same authors (Eiseley, 1975; Gunther, 1961; Byron, cited in Ponsonby, 1923; A. Wilson, 1965; du Maurier, cited in *Writer's Quotation Book*, 1980).[3]

What may be the most apt description of writers' emotional experiences is not one negative emotion over another or one positive emotion over another or even one set of emotions over some other set. Writers seem to draw strength from emotional antitheses. There seems to be a tension, a collision that arises when positive and negative feelings become juxtaposed. At this intersection, no simple feelings exist, said Guy de Maupassant (Murray, 1968). When composing, writers have described in remarkably compatible terms seemingly incompatible feelings like euphoric despair, exhileration, desperation, and wild happiness (Kafka, cited in Dunaway & Evans, 1957; D. Hall, cited in Friebert & Young, 1980; Gunther,1961; Mitford, 1979; S. Tolstoy, cited in Moffat & Painter, 1974; Maupassant, cited in Murray, 1968).

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[3] For fuller documentation on the history of the therapeutic uses of writing, see my book, *Therapy in Writing* (1980).

While I have looked at a scant few writers and noted still fewer of the emotions they document, I have every reason to believe that were I to spend a lifetime researching writers' emotions, it would be a task without end. If I looked long enough and hard enough, I would find every emotion represented, from arch ecstacy to the depths of despair-- some, like James Boswell, seeming to reside in one person. What looms as an impenetrable writer's block for one author would be declared a sine qua non emotion for writing for another. Or somewhere there would be a writer whose production was accompanied by the very emotion I overlooked. Certainly, we cannot assume that the conflicts writers write about reflect their personal lives. Nor can we assume that writers necessarily write about the very affects they are experiencing at the time they are writing. Emotions and writing are not neat, one-to-one equivalents. The array of possible combinations complicate things. But that's hardly a reason to neglect the issue.

Let me say this much. When I read for this section, I selected materials in a disinterested fashion, simply wanting to get as much first hand information on writers' emotions as I could-- positive or negative. In many instances, I was disappointed. Collections that I thought were direct lines to authorial information were critical work artfully disguised. Then I found strong cultural interferences. I could not separate an emotional consciousness and its expression from the conventions of its time period. The material seemed as much a cultural phenomena as a personal one. I am not naive enough to deny that we find what we want to find. I had my hunches. Some of them were borne out. Negative emotions move writers to composing or to expressing their emotions in writing as easily if not more easily than positive emotions. Established writers seem to be able to turn even depressive psychological states associated with diminished activity into powerful motives for writing. When positive emotions

occur, they occur when writing begins, but they seem to occur more often when the work is completed, in the form of relief or satisfaction. Judging from the references to arousal-linked writing, emotion may be an energy source with a label attached to it; the affects to which the arousal referred would then be of less consequence than its capacity simply to mobilize for writing. Judging from statements that bring positive and negative emotions into disjunctive relation, maybe it is discrepant affects, the emotional equivalent of cognitive dissonance, that make people more uncomfortable than entirely negative or positive emotions. Individuals are thus more compelled to turn to writing as a way of reducing this disjunction.

We know relatively little about how "pure" positive and negative emotions act on writing. We know even less about how competing emotions act. You can imagine how little we know about the ability to use emotional dissonance to advantage at critical stages in composing. How any of these operate during composing may well be part of what distinguishes skilled from unskilled writers.

What we do know is that even the simpliest composing is a highly complex bodily task. It requires getting a writing instrument, making sure it's usable, finding a surface to write on, holding the instrument correctly, putting it on the surface, shaping word thoughts into special patterns in a certain order in one's head, moving the instrument along a certain course in a certain direction on the surface in a fashion that has some scribal correspondence to the word thoughts or speech--performing all this automatically while scanning ahead for ideas, thinking back to others, forming the word thoughts that come next, holding them in memory until each has its turn to be converted into graphic symbols strung together and drawn on the surface, and, at some point--more likely at several--reabsorbed through the eyes to be understood and accepted, understood and rejected, understood by modification, or not understood by the brain.

And this hardly accounts for the mental operations that produced the idea in the first place and processed it in the second.

Furthermore, we know how fragile the process is. It may be delayed, interrupted, or abandoned at any time for any number of reasons. A pencil breaks, the writer's mind wanders, the writer blocks, the telephone rings. As a matter of fact, people will fight, shout, run, talk, and are likely to do all those things instead of writing because my sense is that in general few people write when they don't have to. We need only talk to college students or mature adults to realize that over the years, writing has become deeply freighted with negative associations and fertile with opportunity to avoid doing it. People change jobs; students change majors. People will go to great lengths to use some other means to express themselves and communicate. It would probably be far more repressible (or nonexistent altogether) than it is now--were it not for business to transact, money to earn, fame to secure, essay tests to pass, or jobs to get (mind you,all perfectly good reasons for writing). The constraints on the expression of emotion in general are that its particular quality, intensity, and duration are heavily circumscribed by other factors. When it comes to writing, the potency of emotion to express itself is similarly regulated by factors that can impinge more strongly on the writing than emotion. Writers probably have to work even harder if emotions are to be involved in writing at all. So staying with the task may well mean overcoming a great many resistences, working around, through, or past distractions, interruptions, or mental blocks, repeatedly clearing a path for the process to take place or continue. All of which suggests that writing is important enough for people who write to find a way to keep doing it. Which to my mind means there is something important to be learned from such people.

So powerful are our emotions that some theorists (Tomkins,1981; Wilson,

1979; Zajonc, 1980) have cogently argued the independence of affect from cognitive functions under certain conditions. This idea can be traced back to Bain(1864, 1875) and Wundt (1896/1907). Both believed that acts of cognition and recognition were preceded by feelings. When a physical process rose above the threshold of consciousness, its affective elements were noticed before anything else was perceived of its ideational elements. Emotion was therefore always a companion to thought, but thought was not always a companion to emotion. This theme has been revived recently and takes a number of forms. First, research suggests that emotional experiences may precede awareness of them, like anxiety or depression that people feel without knowing about what. It can be impervious to conscious cognizing--as in various types of persuasion(Tomkins, 1981). When cognizing is involved, some environmental events may be subject to only a minimal amount in order to produce arousal (Mandler, 1975). Affective reactions of this type are undifferentiated and binary like good, bad, safe or dangerous.[4] In other instances feelings may be so well learned that sensory input seems to by-pass cognitive processing altogether. So rapid is the affective response that individuals cannot distinguish the sensory experience from the feeling and the feeling from the thought. Time collapses so that sense and feeling seem to occur simultaneously. The feeling becomes the thought. Last, the participation of affect in processing certain types of information may guide cognizing. Affect may run sufficiently ahead of conscious cognizing and actually increase its efficiency (Zajonc, 1980).

In order to reconcile emotions theory with the currently active cognitive psychologies, two trends have occurred. First, what were once rigidly neurological, behavioral, or experiential theories of emotions have evolved into ambitious attempts at integrating traditional approaches with new ideas on human

[4] The more subtle emotions are ignored in this hypothesis.

information processing. These theories are set in broad motivational, behavioral, or or adaptive contexts that cut across several theoretical boundaries (Arnold, 1970; Izard, 1971; Plutchik, 1962; Tomkins, 1981). Second, in response to this interest in the human intellect, earlier experiential approaches to the study of emotion have given way to more exacting mentalistic psychologies. The cognitive mediation of emotions has been addressed in varying degrees of detail by psychologists of several theoretical persuasions (Lazarus et.al.,1970; Mandler, 1975; Plutchik, 1962; Schachter & Singer, 1962).

Despite the small but vocal group of psychologists partial to the affective primacy theory, by and large, contemporary psychology considers emotion postcognitive, not the other way around. Emotions are elicited only after considerable processing of information has taken place. Situations in and of themselves are without meaning until people attach meaning to them. The thinking here is that emotions do not exist in the abstract. They are contextual. They are epiphenomena. They are responses that imply objects. People are angry over something. People love someone. People are excited about something. In order to experience these things, they must know something about the object or situation. They must have recognized or identified some discriminant features of this "thing" and evaluated it before they can feel something about it. And this is cognizing.

Although theorists of this persuasion find room in their accounts for physiology and behavior, they place the higher mental processes squarely at the center of emotions processing. In 1975 Mandler introduced one of the more elegant cognitive paradigms for emotions processing. Drawing first on biologically oriented theory, Mandler identifies two adaptive functions of autonomic arousal. One is embodied in the principle of homeostasis and physiological readiness. The other is a signal to the mental organization for attention and

for scanning the environment. This latter, associated with positive or negative values, thus links arousal with emotion. The second part of this model addresses the cognitive interpretive system itself. This system is the primary way humans make meaning of the world. It intervenes between stimulus events and feelings, it interprets events and produces appraisals which then lead to action. The key theme is interpretation and appraisal. First, we determine meaning. The meaning we impute to our environment refers to the way we interpret or construe it. Then we judge it. Our evaluations of incoming stimuli--positive, negative, or more subtle judgments-- are based on these interpretions. Finally we react. What cognitive processes do in effect is shape an emotional response out of an organism/environmental transaction. And this process never stops, though the appraisals are often not conscious (Plutchik & Kellerman, 1980). As people react and the environment counter-reacts, appraisals are continually altered. Original perceptions and evaluations feed back into all successive emotional states, color the original construals, and set up the conditions for further appraising (Lazarus,et. al., 1970). The chain reaction (Plutchik & Kellerman,1980,) is typically arranged in this order:

stimulus event--->cognitive interpretation---> cognitive evaluation---> feeling--->behavior---> effect.

This process can occur slowly and in seriation. Or it can occur in such rapid succession that its components appear simultaneous.

The important idea here is that the perception of the arousal together with a cognitive interpretation are registered and integrated in consciousness and create emotional experience. By definition emotional experience resides there. It is as private as our thoughts. However the interaction between arousal and interpretation also creates emotional behavior. What we observe of ourselves

or others when we write is behavior (actual as well as its verbal surrogates) and we can track it over time.

Indeed, common sense and personal experience tell us that feeling angry and feeling sad reflect different emotional conditions which by and large lead to different courses of action (Spielberger,1972). In writing the same thing happens. At the most elementary level, we make lexical and syntactic choices all along the way, based at least on some coarse discriminations about what we like or we don't like. Take Joe Blow. He hates his mother. He decides to write to her or about her, a reasoned decision. He begins. He thinks of the word, hate. He thinks of writing: I hate you; Or: I can't stand you. Or: We don't get along. He has some choices based on which language *best* expresses his anger, which language *best* communicates his anger, which language makes him feel better but does not cut him off from his inheritance. We can show that such an evaluation is an affective phenomenon. That is not difficult. Unfortunately, things are not quite that clear cut. Emotions are not typically found in their pure states. They mix, blend, become subtler, richer in meaning, appear to be experienced simultaneously, seem sometimes paradoxical but under voluntary control. All this should be handled by an emotions model.

It is certainly too early to write a model for affect and the various ways it interacts with cold cognitions. Almost all the important pieces of evidence are missing. To start with, a model that makes inroads into an only dimly known cognitive paradigm needs to show interaction with affect at three points: before, during, and after writing. Since this is a process model, we need to know how it works--how affect and cognition collaborate in getting people from one point in the process to another. Once into the actual composing, the model should show the continual exchange between the information processing elements and the affective strands that go with it. I am referring to the affective

properties of value or sign, intensity, magnitude and direction of change during writing, and so on. A model should be sensitive enough to depict the more supple affective input as well. Ultimately, by describing the major influences of thought and emotion on writing, the model should account for the causal links.

We know that the impulse to write may be indirectly or heavily imbued with emotion or empty of it. There must be countless writers producing deeply moving work from psychological states quite barren of emotion --for strict commercial or professional rewards. Behind many masterpieces it is said can be detected, "either the itch for fame or the desire to make money." Milton, Johnson, Thoreau were intensely competitive with healthy egos and a healthy respect for economics(West, 1980,p.409). Other times writing is a civic or academic necessity. At still other times there are more subtle motives. But for many who write under no obvious pressure to do so there seems to be some quality of emotional engagement that brings them to and keeps them at nothing else but pencil and paper. The excesses of metaphor notwithstanding, we cannot but agree that certain emotional states often accompany writing and have the power to sustain writers through laborious revisions.

One theme is clear. Cognitive factors are powerful determiners of language. Although some environmental events may be subject to very little meaning analysis for emotional response to occur on the one side, human emotion depends at least in part on symbolic capacities. On the other, the affective aspects of writing should not be swallowed up by cognitive ones. By that I mean that cognition should not be so construed as to define emotion out of existence. Nor should affect be treated as immutably postcognitive. Emotion has a life of its own. Its distinctive freedom from attentive control, its speed, the range and depth of writing that it can recruit suggest something special about its influence on language.

I do not know enough to argue causality in either direction. I simply say that failure to examine emotion with the same critical attention that cognition inspires is a glaring oversight. We are continually reminded that the higher mental processes that we connect with words develop through the representation of feelings as well as thought. Feeling and thought both involve energy and information. Neither is free of the other. Evidence and thought point at least to the reciprocal role of cognitive and affective processes in our mental life which makes the role of emotion in writing inapposite to ignore. The whole history of written discourse indicates that writers are very much influenced by their emotions. Common sense and personal experience tell us that there are cognitive advantages to emotional motives. Until we know otherwise, the more comprehensive our study of the affective and cognitive content of composing, the more likely it will reflect their true interpenetration.

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